West Street Community School

Attendance Policy

**Introduction**

The staff, governors and parents at West Street Community School work together to provide a high quality education in a safe, caring and stimulating environment. We want the children to achieve high standards and to enjoy their work and play in all areas of the curriculum, developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes which will enable them to learn and to succeed throughout their lives. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for their absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that we make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets how we together we can achieve this.

**Why Regular Attendance is so important?**

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil’s absence disrupts the teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child’s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

**Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody’s responsibility – Parents, Pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us focus on this we will:

* Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance
* Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
* Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and events
* Give you details on attendance in our school newsletter
* Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across school
* Develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
* Make attendance and punctuality a priority for everyone associated with school, including parents, pupils, staff and governors.
* Set targets to improve pupil and whole school attendance.

**Understanding Types of Absence:**

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is ALWAYS required.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoons away from school for an unavoidable reason like illness, medical or dental appointments which cannot be taken outside the school day and other emergencies or unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This type of leave can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These types of absences include but are not exclusive to:

* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
* Child not attending due to parental illness
* Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
* Shopping, birthdays, looking after other children
* Day trips and holidays which have not been agreed
* Absences for trips that exceed the amount agreed by the Head teacher.

**Holidays taken during term time**

It is the general policy of the school to not authorise holiday periods taken during term time unless there are extenuating circumstances or the length of leave is a minimum of days (ie 1 or 2). Any such leave must have been requested via an Application for Leave of Absence form available from the school office.

**Persistent Absence (PA)**

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they have missed 10% or more of their schooling at any time across a school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need parents’ fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

Persistently absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to personalised support and an action plan to ensure positive outcomes for our children. The Local Authority Attendance Team is automatically made aware of all pupils identified as Persistent Absentees.

**Penalty Notices**

It is the policy of West Street School to consider requesting the LA to issue a penalty notice where a pupil’s absence falls below 90% and is unauthorised or when a pupil takes unauthorised leave of a longer period of time. This is considered on an individual case basis and follows the LA procedures for this.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ATTENDANCE MATTERS IN

WEST STREET COMMUNITY SCHOOL

**THE SCHOOL**

* Promote a culture across the school which highlights the importance of regular and punctual attendance
* Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all pupils, parents, teachers and governors
* Promote positive and consistent communication between home and school
* Monitor and analyse individual and whole school attendance levels (in conjunction with the relevant agencies as appropriate)
* Contact parents on day 1 of any pupil absence where that reason for absence is not known
* Consider requests for extended leave of absence in light of the pupil’s own attendance pattern and impact upon their education
* Contact the LA as required to issue warning letters, penalty notices or parenting contracts in accordance with the local code of conduct

**GOVERNORS WILL:**

* Consider requests for extended leave of absence in light of the pupil’s own attendance pattern and impact upon their education

**PARENTS:**

* Ensure children attend regularly and on time
* Will contact the school on the first day of any absence
* Explain the reason for a child’s absence on or before the child’s return to schooling
* Where applicable show medical appointment cards/letters
* Avoid holidays in term time wherever possible
* Apply for permission for any ‘leave’ in term time in advance
* Attend meetings in school with regards to poor attendance and punctuality
* Participation in Parent Contracts, Common Assessment Framework and co-operate in support and interventions offered by school or other agencies

**PUPILS WILL:**

* Attend regularly
* Attend punctually
* Work towards his/her individual attendance target

Mrs Gerrard in the school office logs all daily attendance and liases with our Pastoral Support Worker Mrs Peake.

Mrs Peake will follow up on absence that causes a concern.

**THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY**

**Next Review date September 2018**